

**The following comment applies to Monorail DEIS (USCG-2003-15797) Section 4.10, Parks and Recreation:**

The DEIS omits some very important recreational open space in its assessment of the impact of the downtown alignment.

1. Pocket parks.

The DEIS considers only the largest downtown parks (Westlake, Pioneer Square, and Occidental) in its statement. DEIS ignores the presence of numerous small pocket parks and other open space areas in the downtown section, particularly on 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. There is no mention of a small but critical cluster of open space and park area near 2<sup>nd</sup> and Union?, which includes the Garden of Remembrance at Benaroya Hall, the landscaped plaza adjoining the Seattle Art Museum, and the lower plaza at the Washington Mutual tower. In a downtown like Seattle's, with its severe shortage of open space, smaller parks like these provide essential outdoor gathering spaces, and are extremely popular with downtown office workers, residents, and tourists alike. In reality, they provide the only open space available in many parts of downtown. The monorail would impact these spaces with shade, noise, and blocked views; these impacts must be addressed. How will monorail mitigate the impact on these spaces?

2. Streetscape.

Strolling, people watching, meeting a friend under the shade of a tree, or just hanging out, are passive recreational activities that occur all the time in pocket parks and even on our city's streets and sidewalks. A healthy city should have attractive streets that provide a pleasant setting for pedestrian activity, sidewalk cafes, and the like. In Seattle, where there is an acute shortage of open space in the downtown area, the role of streets is especially important. Therefore, the impact of the monorail on the quality of the streets it occupies should be part of a fair assesment of its environmental impact on the downtown's recreation areas.